



PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE OCEANS

Recreational Fishermen Protecting California's Ocean Resources

November 19, 2007

The Honorable Susan Golding, Chair
MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Good morning, Mayor Golding and BRTF members,

My name is Dan Wolford; today I am speaking on behalf of the Partnership for Sustainable Oceans. I am the Science Director of the Coastside Fishing Club, one of the principal members of the Partnership, and I am also a member of the Pacific Fishery Management Council. The other Partnership organizations are the American Sportfishing Association, United Anglers of Southern California, Sportfishing Association of California, Southern California Marine Association, Nor-Cal Kayak Anglers, and the National Marine Manufacturers Association.

As you know the Partnership submitted an external proposal, and we will be submitting a revised version in a few days. We entered into this process about a year ago, working both within and external to the process, with the express purpose of creating a win-win outcome for all of the stakeholders. It has always been our objective to be in the lead, creating a moderate position that will achieve very high conservation ratings while still enabling good fishing opportunities throughout the region. Based on a recent Field Research Survey – that is exactly what the people of California want. We intend to satisfy that objective.

We submitted our Marine Resources Protection Plan (External B) for consideration prior to the last RSG meeting in Gualala. We saw the SAT analysis of our proposal just last Tuesday in Pacifica. At that time we were surprised and disappointed with its low evaluation. Since then we have been working hard to understand why it rated the way it did, and have concluded that part of our disappointment is because we failed to properly communicate our intent – because the evaluation methodology was not clearly available to us; and consequently the scores do not reflect our true conservation position. We believe that our next iteration will, in fact, score much higher. But today I want to call your attention to some of the concerns that we faced, and continue to face, as we try to create the moderate position we have always said we are going to provide.

First I want to address the submittal requirements imposed on all the external proposals. The process required that we submit our initial proposal in time to meet the deadline of Oct 3. That

was nearly two weeks prior to the RSG teams developing their proposals in Gualala. Consequently we were disadvantaged by the lack of guidance information disseminated in the interim period, and during that meeting, regarding how the proposals would be evaluated. And what really hurt us, are the specifics of how the conservation evaluation would be conducted – and those specifics drove so much of the rest of the SAT evaluations.

Now here we are again – after our first look at the SAT evaluations on Tuesday, November 13th, and still waiting on full disclosure/documentation of SAT evaluation methodology – facing a second submittal date of noon on December 3 – only 2 weeks from today (with a Holiday in between) and only 3 weeks from the disclosure of the SAT evaluations. Once again our submittal will be a full week in front of the next RSG meeting. We are simply not being provided adequate time to respond to the details of the evaluation. Not only are those details critical to the fine tuning necessary to properly structure our proposal, but the different submittal dates for the external and RSG proposals biases the playing field, putting all of the external proposals at a distinct disadvantage.

And secondly I want to address the need for better communication between the MLPA team, including the SAT, and those of us working on external, or even RSG, proposals. There are 4 different analysis models under consideration and or development by the SAT, and we have yet to see how any of them work; which one might be adopted; or how they might shape the development of our proposals. During the SAT meeting, conflicting analysis methodologies were discussed regarding size evaluation, and it still is not clear which way the SAT is going to go. At the end of the SAT meeting we asked for clarification regarding the details of how our proposal was evaluated, and those details were still being provided, in bits and pieces as late as last Friday, the 16th – and it is still not complete enough to confidently utilize. Once again we are finding the establishment of evaluation guidelines difficult at best, and the communication of those guidelines to be in equally poor shape.

Never-the-less we are committed to this process as best we can. We intend to improve our Marine Resources Protection Plan, and do what we said we would do from the very beginning: take a lead position in bringing a moderate proposal to the table that will be a win-win solution for all parties. But in order to do that we ask that you level the playing field by making available the necessary analysis and requirements guidance to all the proposal developers, and by equalizing the amount of time available to respond to that guidance relative to our required submission dates.

Thank you for your consideration,

Orig. /s/ *Dan WOLFORD*

Dan WOLFORD, Science Director
Coastside Fishing Club

cc: California Fish and Game Commission